6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

583 Frequently there are bloody encounters if the pursuers succeed
628 in overtaking the fugitives. The pursuit is continued till the precincts of the village of the ravishers are reached. After this the kinsmen of the woman enter into negotiations with the kidnaper and usually the affair ends with the payment of indemnity and obligations as decreed by custom. Favorable results in negotiations are easily reached if the abduction has been made with the consent of the woman; in the contrary, the procedure is complicated and continues for a long time, with bloody encounters. And in the kidnaping of a married woman the consequence is the blood feud in which take part, not only the family of the woman but all the community, and the only satisfaction in this case is the death of the culprit and the return of the woman. As an illustration, we may cite a passage from the work of I. A. Bartolomei,[3] who during a journey in Svanetia was cordially entertained by the nobleman, Dadash Japaridze, who was not himself taking part in the general good time and conversation. "He related to me the cause of his grief," writes Bartolomei; "his house was deeply offended, requiring bloodshed and vengeance. Not long ago the young wife of his son was kidnaped by a nobleman from Lechkhum. Until she is returned, the family of Japaridze will be covered with a shameful stain which cannot be washed away even with blood. 'If the whole of this mountain,' said the old man to me, pointing out the mountain Elbrus at the foot of which we were staying, 'were transformed into gold and given to me in exchange for my dishonor—even then I would not be satisfied. God sees we are real Christians, but we cannot bear the insult to our family and until they return to me my daughter I will revenge till the last breath of my life.'"

584 In order to avoid the grave consequences of the abduction of a
589 bride, the Pshavs have as a remedy the custom of announcing in public gatherings the betrothal of certain couples. This custom is called the *kvethilshi chasma*. If a girl announces publicly as the betrothed of a certain man that she does not like him, she has the right not to marry him, according to the custom prevailing for

[3] Bartolomei: 99.

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such an occasion. She may use this custom for her advantage and be freed from compulsory marriage, on the condition that she publicly takes a vow to remain single forever. The vow consists of the following words, in English translation: "I swear by the names of all saints, by the *Lashris jvari,* and by the name of *Thamar Pirmze* that I am determined to stay single forever!" After this she is called by the people a *motsmindari;* she has no right to marry, and is obliged to stay single. Some girls (*motsmindaris*) have even discarded the feminine dress and habit of life. They have dressed themselves in men's clothes, carried arms as every man does in Pshavia, and have even taken part in drinking parties and war expeditions. The last representative of such *motsmindari,*[4] died in 1885 in the village of Khushkheti. Her name was Tsukia.

Some time later, after the betrothal, the Pshav bridegroom sends to the parents of his bride five *chapi*[5] of wine and one sheep; this is called *sakhlis sanakhavath* meaning the house visitation. After this the relatives of the bridegroom, together with their friends and neighbors, say beforehand special prayers for the occasion, and go to see the bride. They take with them six *chapi* of wine, bread, brandy (*araki*), and two sheep. This visitation is called *mosakithkhi,* meaning to inquire after, it is also called *rigtsesi,* meaning order. Besides this provision, all of the visitors carry some present for the bride, so the women give woolen and silken stuff, rings, ear-rings, etc., and the men present money, not less than one ruble in silver each.

The relatives of the bride add their own food to the victuals brought by the guests and entertain them with liberal hospitality. The next day, the father of the bride invites his friends and the *khevis-beri,* who kills the sheep sent by the bridegroom, lights the candles, and prays God's blessing upon the marrying couple. After the prayer the bride is led out from the house and seated on a chair in the middle of the yard, surrounded by all the guests. Then, from the assembled guests there is chosen a man known for the quick smartness of his tongue and mind as the official talker

[4] Khizanashvili: 132.
[5] *Chapi*—a measure containing 20 bottles.

CHAPTER IX

The Position of Woman

562 589 Discussing the cases of divorce among the Georgian Highlanders, we saw that the right of separation was possessed by man and denied to woman, although in case of the woman's innocence, the husband was requested to arrange the property settlement, as decreed by custom. From the very first day of her life woman was unfavored by her parents, who always gave preference to the male child, and attached great importance to the son of the family, the circumstance of which was clearly manifested by the Svans in the custom of killing the female children and allowing the boys to live. From her childhood woman is loaded with hard work, in her parental home as well as after marriage in the home of her husband, where she has to perform, besides the household duties, the field work also. If she becomes a widow and has no children, she returns to the home of her parents, and the relatives of her deceased husband are obliged to give her her *sathavno* (personal capital), in full, and in addition as many cows as the years of her married life, not counting the first year. The procedure is the same as in the payment of indemnity in divorce motivated by the husband.[1] If the widow prefers, she is entitled to remain in the house of her dead husband, and his relatives must take care of her.[2] With the Svans she even takes a privileged position.[3] In a case where a widow has a son, she does not marry again. "It is regarded as a shame among the Khevsurs," writes Eristov,[4] "if a widow who has a son marries again." The same information is given also by Dr. Radde: "Eine Wittwe Kann, wenn sie einen sohn hat," writes he concerning the Khevsurs,[5] "nicht die zweite Ehe schliessen, es gilt das fuer schimpflich."

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[1] See "Divorce."
[2] Zisserman: 251.
[3] Kovalevsky: a, II, 51.
[4] Eristov: 113.
[5] Radde: d, 90.

1 [see p 1164, cat. 11c -- Analyst]

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422 The individual property rights of Georgian women are strikingly similar to the property rights of women in Egypt, where the woman's property "remains generally at her disposal, and she retains in contracts the right to leave her husband and to keep her property together with the bride gift."[8]

422 428 Among the Svans,[9] the wife is the sole proprietor of her dowry and without her consent no part of it can be alienated. If arable land forms a part of the dowry, the husband has a right to make use of it only with the permission of his wife. He is nothing more than a caretaker of her property, and not her master and lord.

The property of a woman is inherited by her children. If it is not large, the only inheritor is her daughter; in the contrary case it is divided among all her children, male and female. The woman may lend her capital to a stranger at interest, and to members of her family as well. They are obliged to return it to her. If a woman dies childless, her property belongs to her parents; if they refuse to accept it, it goes to her husband.

586 589 In case of a divorce, if it is not the result of adultery, she receives her *sathavno* in full, which represents her life's security. She receives also an additional compensation.[10] The widow had full right to stay in the home of her deceased husband, or could return to her parental home, in which case she received her *sathavno* in full from the relatives of her dead husband.

Interesting facts concerning the property rights of the Georgian woman are given by E. Gabasvili[11] in an article printed in the Georgian journal, "Iveria."

2. Group Ownership—

421 After the discussion of individual property rights of the Georgian Highlanders, we shall review the question of group ownership. We find it expressed in the communal ownership of pasture grounds and forests and religious property.

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[8] Hobhouse: I, 183.
[9] Kovalevsky: a, II, 50.
[10] See "Divorce."
[11] Gabashvili.